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The Rise & Fall Of Craig Mack's Second Bad Boy Run: 2002 - 2005

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Craig Mack and Bad Boy Records have a pretty interesting history together.

As much as talking about Sean 'P. Diddy/Puff Daddy' Combs is understandably a negative subject nowadays it's extremely difficult to discuss Craig's career without mentioning Combs or his Bad Boy label.

Craig saw huge success, in 1994, with the release of the classic hit 'Flava In Ya Ear', taken from his debut album 'Project: Funk Da World', which helped put Bad Boy on the map however with the rise of The Notorious B.I.G, and other acts on the label, Craig

found himself lost in the shuffle and pushed aside despite being the one who struck gold for them.

Craig eventually left the label and went on to release his second album 'Operation: Get Down', in 1997, to poor reviews and sales which saw him eventually disappear from the mainstream spotlight shortly after.

Though Craig failed to capture the magic of his Bad Boy debut he continued on the Underground Hip-Hop scene and managed to gain himself an Underground hit, in late '99/early '00, with 'The Wooden Horse' which was a white label drop that managed to receive airplay on commercial stations such as Hot97 and BBC Radio.

Craig Mack 'The Wooden Horse' (Audio)

The singles big break came courtesy of a placement on the 'What's The Worst That Can Happen?' soundtrack, from 2001, that also featured Erick Sermon's hit record 'Music'.

Along with other Underground releases, such as 'Mack Come Thru' and 'Brand New N!gga' that occupied the mixtape circuit, Craig managed to get his name back out there enough that even Puffy couldn't help but notice his re-emergence through the Underground scene.

Craig's return to the Bad Boy fold occurred with a feature on the remix of G. Dep's montser hit 'Special Delivery', in 2002, which also featured appearances from Ghostface Killah and Keith Murray.

G. Dep 'Special Delivery' (Remix) (feat. Ghostface Killah, Keith Murray and Craig Mack) (Official Video)

Despite those additional appearances from Ghost and Murray it was Craig's verse that stood out the most with the opening line "You must wanna be in the Guinness book of world records, as the dumbest mother fucker alive". Definitely a dope way to reintroduce yourself to the mainstream audience.

The news started coming out that Mack was back and a new album was on the way, as per an interview with MTV.com, in 2002. This particular news would also explained the cancellation of a new album from Mack that was announced on an episode of the BBC Radio One Rap Show, in 2000, which was set to be titled 'That's My Word'.

Craig further cemented his new Bad Boy affiliation with a cameo in Puffy's 'I Need A Girl (Part One)' music video and an appearance on the track 'And We...' from the 'Barbershop' soundtrack, in 2002, however his appearance on the track was ridiculously short and didn't showcase his talent whatsoever so it's unclear what the purpose of this was to be honest.

In 2003 Craig dropped the singles 'Straight In Ya Mouf' and 'Excuse Me', through his own MackWorld Records label, which both explicitly mention Bad Boy on them. The 'Excuse Me' hook even went as far as to declare "Craig Mack's back on Bad Boy, you not gon' last boy".

Craig Mack 'Straight In Ya Mouf' (Audio)

Craig Mack 'Excuse Me' (Audio)

Craig continued to make more mainstream appearances, on behalf of Bad Boy, including the DJ Kay Slay track 'Everybody Wanna Shine', alongside Black Rob and G. Dep, from 2003's 'The Streetsweeper Vol.1' as well as a dope cut called 'The Grinch', from Dirty Harry and Big Mike's 'Bad Boy Reloaded' mixtape, however the song was massively overlooked due to it's placement, as a mixtape track, so the majority of the mainstream audience would have had no idea this one even dropped.

DJ Kay Slay 'Everybody Wanna Shine' (feat. Black Rob, G. Dep and Craig Mack) (Audio)

Craig Mack 'The Grinch' (Audio)

Craig did continue to drop singles, in 2004, in the form of 'MackWorld Records' and 'Spawn', again through his own label, however on this occasion neither song mentioned Bad Boy on them. It had also been 2 years since Craig announced this new Bad Boy album and, with the exception of some Underground singles, mixtape cuts and guest appearances, there was no sight of this new album at all.

Craig Mack 'MackWorld Records' (Audio)

Craig Mack 'Spawn' (Audio)

Craig and Bad Boy's relationship appeared to fizzle out by 2005 and his last appearance for them was on an interlude called 'Where Da Bypass At?' from Black

Rob's 'The Black Rob Report' album.

As a whole Craig Mack's 3 year run with Bad Boy Records, between 2002 - 2005, was a huge waste with only a handful of truly dope moments to reflect on.

It should also be noted that during this period there was never any confirmation that Craig had re-signed with the label so this could have been a major reason for the breakdown of this relationship.

Also Puffy is a piece of shit (something the entire world now knows!!!) and could have held up negotiations of a new contract. Craig's financial situation, and the promise of a new deal at the time, would have possibly kept him on a leash which would explain his Bad Boy related appearances and need to shout the label out on his own single releases.

Before Craig's passing, in 2018, he started conducting interviews for a documentary (which still remains unreleased) in which he mentions, during one of the clips that was released, about a stand off with a certain record executive who was holding his money up to finish a new album.

The hold up, as Craig states, could have ended tragically however this is when he said he discovered a radio show hosted by Brother R.G. Stair, of the Overcomer Ministry, that would change his life forever.

Based on the timing of his interaction with the record executive and discovering Brother Stair's broadcast this would have been around the time of his second run with Bad Boy and would indicate that the executive he was referring to was actually Puffy (though this has never been fully confirmed).

As a whole this run has always been a bit of a mystery, in terms of his contractual status with Bad Boy and the long lasting affect it had on him personally, but based on the limited information made available, over the years, it does appear that this run was the one that truly ended up changing both Craig's perspective on both the music industry and his life in general.

Craig Mack's Last Interview (Video)

Unfortunately his next move would be joining the Overcomer Ministry which was probably just as bad as dealing with Puffy and Bad Boy.

Despite everything that happened to him, during his lifetime, we prefer to remember Craig Mack as one of Hip-Hop's illest emcees and no matter what happened to his career, post 2005, he still managed to kicked mad flava in ya ear!!!

R.I.P Craig Mack and FUCK YOU Sean Combs!!!

Bad Boy Records | Black Rob | Brother R.G. Stair | Craig Mack | DJ Kay Slay | G. Dep | Hip-Hop | Overcomer Ministry | P. Diddy | Puff Daddy | R.A.W Media | Rap

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